

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT The Order of Battle of the Soviet Ground Forces  
in the Soviet Zone of Germany and Austria and the  
German Kaserned Volkspolizei

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In November 1954, the situation of Soviet troop units in the Soviet Zone of Germany was characterized by three special programs, namely the personnel exchange program, the motor vehicle exchange program and the reequipment of artillery units. Since these programs are still under way, no conclusions can be drawn about their effects on the combat power of the troops concerned.

The readiness for action, however, will be considerably affected until late January 1955 by the personnel exchange program which involved a larger number of soldiers than usual.

GERMANYOrder of Battle.

1. After the return of the Soviet troop units to their winter posts, the OB List for the Soviet Zone has again been scrutinized. The attached list will serve as basis for the following months.

Training and Employment of Troops.

2. The units are fully occupied with the training of the numerous recruits. According to observations at the kasernes, training included basic training, drill with and without weapons, march practices of small units in the barracks yard, instruction on heavy weapons, driving practice with motor vehicles and armored vehicles, record practice with infantry weapons, and frequent theoretical instruction and political indoctrination. Firing by

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tank training battalions and artillery units at training grounds was observed only in a few cases.

In addition to the training, the units engaged in the exchange of motor vehicles, guns, and ammunition for these guns, the renumbering of motor vehicles, servicing of equipment, reconditioning of post training installations and the distribution of recruits, as well as the discharge of trained personnel. Regular combat training is not expected to begin before early December. The readiness for action, therefore, reached the lowest level in 1954 and will gradually increase only after the winter exercises of combined arms in late January 1955.

3. The same applies to the special units. Major elements of the 36th Bridge Bldg Regt of the GSFG are presumably still stationed in the APOLLERSDORF training area on the Elbe River to which they moved on 20 October. A unit of the 124th Hv How Brig from BRANDENBURG engaged in firing practices at ALPENGRABOW on 13 and 14 November. On 24/25 November, 15 track-laying amphibious vehicles, similar to those of the special unit in SPENNERBERG, were unloaded in EBERSWALDE.

#### Personnel Exchange.

4. While the discharge of trained personnel continued, the arrival of recruits from the USSR, which had been observed for approximately 8 weeks, apparently terminated in late November. Between 20 September and 25 November, 65 troop shuttle trains were reported to have arrived from the USSR. Another 62 trains are believed to have arrived according to the order of train numbers observed.

It can thus be concluded that a total of approximately 175,000 recruits arrived. This number exceeds that of 1953 by 60,000 men.

The induction of the 1935 class is confirmed by Order No 160 from the Soviet Ministry of Defense, dated 8 September 1954, and by another Soviet document. It is assumed that in addition to the 1935 class, members of the 1934 class who had previously been deferred, were also inducted. Although several sources reported that the recruits included unusually young men, there are no indications that a younger class was inducted. The information that the newly arrived soldiers also included trained personnel has not been confirmed so far.

There is no doubt that the number of discharges in this year was considerably higher than in 1953. It is believed that an estimated 30,000 men more than in 1953 have been discharged so far. According to the abovementioned order and on the basis of an exact interpretation of the compulsory service law, the members of the 1931 and 1932 classes had to be discharged. Figures which may support or contradict this assumption will be available only after the completion of the discharge program.

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Reequipment.

5. The following changes in the equipment with weapons were observed in October and November 1954:

- a. Equipping of mechanized regiments with JSU-122 and SU-100 guns. Up to 3 SP guns were observed with one mechanized regiment each in WEIMAR, GRIMMA, BAD FRIEDENAU and JUETERBOJ and 8 SP guns were observed in KLOSTERNEUBURG, Austria. Since no tanks were observed being turned in at that time, it can be assumed that the mechanized regiments were reinforced by one SP gun company.
- b. The reequipping of mortar regiments of tank and mechanized divisions mentioned in Monthly Report of August has been confirmed by the observation of one battalion of 12 x 122-mm field howitzers with each of 3 tank divisions and 4 mechanized divisions including the 13th Gds Mech Div in Austria. In exchange for the howitzers, 120-mm mortars were turned in. There were no indications, however, that the entire mortar equipment of these mortar regiments was exchanged for field howitzers.
- c. Beginning in early November, guns have continually arrived from the USSR, and guns and ammunition have continually been exchanged between artillery units in the zone. These shipments, the purpose of which could not be determined, included:

2 November. A train with 35 guns, according to caliber, presumably 152-mm gun howitzers, and 20 boxcars which went from BREST LITOVSK to GERA.

3 November. Twenty 152-mm field howitzers which were unloaded in BERNAU.

7 November. Sixteen guns, presumably 152 mm gun howitzers which were unloaded in Gera by the 305th Arty Brig.

9 November. A train of approximately 45 flatcars with guns which went from BREST LITOVSK to FRANKFURT/ODER.

12 November. A train with 40 x 120 to 150-mm guns and 40 motor vehicles which came from the direction of PALKENBERG and proceeded westward via LEIPZIG-TRAUCHA. At night, guns were reportedly entrained in KOLNIGSBUECK.

17 November. A train with 4 x 100-mm AT guns and 20 AT guns of a smaller caliber which came from the direction of EICHENAU-BERNAU and proceeded via BERLIN-Ostkreuz.

18 November. Thirty-five 152-mm gun howitzers which came from FRANKFURT/ODER and were unloaded in POTSDAM-Maldpark.

20 November. Sixteen 122 mm field howitzers and 3 of the 152-mm gun howitzers which arrived in GERA on 7 November were entrained there by the 305th Arty Brig.

Twenty-six 87-mm AT guns which were entrained in BRANDENBURG.

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21 November. A train of 26 flatcars with guns and 30 boxcars which went from BREST LITOVSK to FRANKFURT/ODER.

24 November. A shipment of 36 x 122-mm field guns which went from POTSDAM to SCHWERIN.

25 November. A shipment of 16 boxcars with ammunition and escorting detail which went from POTSDAM to SCHWERIN.

28 November and 3 December. A total of 152-mm field howitzers and 6 x 100-mm AT guns which were unloaded in DALLGOW and were picked up by the 1st Mech Div.

30 November. Ten boxcars of ammunition which went from BURG to DALLGOW.

1 December. Eight 85-mm AT guns without vehicles which were entrained in BINZ on RUGEN Island.

A shipment of approximately 20 x 100-mm AT guns and 10 x 57-mm AT guns which came from the direction of BERLIN-OSTPREUSE and proceeded toward FUERSTENWALDE-FRANKFURT/ODER.

The shipment on 17 November, the second shipment on 20 November and the two shipments on 1 December may have gone to the ordnance collecting point of the CSFG in FUERSTENWALDE. This tabulation tends to indicate that the reequipping is limited to units of the IV Arty Corps and artillery brigades of the armies and rifle corps.

- d. On 13 November, a shipment of 10 tanks arrived at the post of one tank division of each mechanized army. The arrival or unloading of these shipments was confirmed by various sources in SATZKORN, ALTRUPPIN and ZEITHAIN.

the fourth shipment went to DESSAU-REINSBORF. The corresponding description of these tanks, as well as the special camouflage and security measures taken during the unloading, indicate that T-54 tanks were probably involved. The caliber of the tank guns which, according to other information, had no muzzle brakes, was not determined.

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Interpretation

7. a. During the reported period, the traffic situation of the DDR railroads had slightly improved. Hardest shipments continued at a heavy rate but the return of Soviet troops until to their military posts after conclusion of their fall maneuvers was completed by late October. The annual rotation of Soviet personnel continued. Railcars were temporarily in short supply due to the disruption in early November of 1,200 to 1,500 railcars to the east in connection with the motor vehicle replacement action and the shipment of artillery pieces to Germany. The number of major train delays caused by an increased utilization of war-brown coal by locomotives rose.
- b. The railroad coal situation continued to deteriorate. Coal stocks available on 16 November 1954 presented 7-8 days' requirements which must be considered a critical low. About 53 percent of railroad coal stocks consisted of hard coal. So far, increased hard coal imports from Poland have not essentially improved the railroad coal situation.
8. North eastbound and westbound traffic through DDR border stations increased slightly, but this increase led to some operational difficulties at Frankfurt/Oder which is the main border station. In detail the following features of railroad border traffic appear noteworthy:
  - a. A **notable** increase in the number of motor vehicles arriving in and leaving the zone.
  - b. Arrival of artillery pieces and individual tanks. See Paragraph 5.
  - c. Continuation of the annual personnel rotation through LUBSTERN, FRANKFURT/ODER, and RUBEN.
  - d. Resumption of gas imports from the GDR on a limited scale after mid-November.
  - e. Increase in the rate of export shipments to the USSR due to a desire to fulfill open quotas by the end of the year.
  - f. Increase in Polish hard coal shipments directed through RUBEN, GUBEN, LUBST, and ECKA.
  - g. The NORMA border station was closed for several days in late October and mid-November, because the temporary railroad bridge over the Neisse River at NORMA was replaced by a permanent structure. During these days, railroad traffic was rerouted through neighboring border stations.

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Miscellaneous.

9. a. There are indications that at least some of the previous German locomotive brigades will soon be reactivated for Soviet transit traffic through Poland.
- b. The single-track BUELEBEN - FRIEDRICHSWERTH - GROSSBEHRINGEN railroad line which was reported to be under reconstruction has been put into operation as far as FRIEDRICHSWERTH which is about 13.5 km distant from BUELEBEN.
- c. A second track was put into operation on the LUECHELN - KRULPA section of the MERSEBURG - QUERFURT railroad line (Geiseltalbahn). The section has only local importance for the hydrogenation plants and brown coal mines located in this area.
- d. The scheduled introduction of the Soviet dispatcher system had to be delayed in some RBDs because signal installations required were not completed in time.
- e. On 1 October 1954, the LUKOW - SIERADZ railroad line south of Warsaw was put into operation. The line which is part of the FRANKFURT/ODER - BREST LITOVSK line, the main Soviet supply route, was built in order to ease the strain on the WARSAW railroad station. Work on the line was started in 1952. The line is believed to be single-track but it will probably be double-tracked later. Three large bridges are located on the line.

Summary.

10. a. The motor vehicle replacement action, which has been observed since late July 1954, was considerably increased in late November. Trucks were usually involved. According to unconfirmed information, four or five trains loaded with new motor vehicles arrived at GDR border stations daily in early November. By mid-November, a total of 4,250 trucks had been observed arriving from the USSR, while 3,250 worn-out trucks were counted leaving East Germany for the USSR. It must be taken into consideration, however, that approximately 50 percent of the actual shipments were observed. On the assumption that this estimate is correct, it appears that about 20 percent of the motor vehicle equipment of the USSR were replaced. A motor vehicle replacement action of a similar size and nature was carried out in 1952. If motor vehicle shipments connected with this replacement action continue beyond the extent observed so far, it would indicate that the motor vehicles shipped to Germany will not serve only as replacement for worn-out equipment. Some shipments observed within the framework of the motor vehicle replacement action were remarkable because of the composition of the trains.

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These shipments included boxcars carrying personnel, the strength of which exceeded the number of escort personnel previously observed with supply trains. It is possible that these trains carried complete motor transport units. Further information is required to clarify this point.

- b. With regard to the arrival of new tanks, see Paragraph 5 d.
- c. The shipment of rifles from East-German plants (SUHL) to the Central Ordnance and Equipment Depot of the KVP in HENNERSDORF was observed for the first time in early October.

#### Kaserne Volkspolizei.

#### Order of Battle

- 11. No changes.

#### Dispositions

- 12. In November 1954, normal activities were observed at the posts. Almost all units began with the training of recruits in addition to small exercises in the vicinity of the post. The majority of the motor vehicles was put on blocks in late November. About 50 percent of the enlisted personnel were detached for employment in the harvesting of potatoes and turnips during the whole month.

Korps Nord: Light elements of the Inf Regt ROSTOCK still conducted infantry firing practices at the GRAAL training grounds.

Korps Sued: In November, Major General John (fnu), previously employed in the MGI/KVP, was confirmed as new corps general of Korps Sued. In September and October, the KVP camp at NIEDERSCHLAG was being dismantled.

Mech Div POTSDAM: A new training area was being prepared between LEHNITZ and BORGSDORF, south of ORANIENBURG. KVPs from ORANIENBURG were employed in the clearing of this area in November. The DOEBERITZ troop training grounds was to be enlarged toward the east as far as the zonal border of West-BERLIN for the KVP. Small-scale firing practices, apparently of tank units, were observed at the training grounds near Kietz as late as November.

#### Arrival of Motor Vehicles.

- 13. On 26 October and 19 November, 10 new trucks arrived each day at the ORANIENBURG concentration camp; on 25 October, 8 new tank trucks arrived in the Kavallerie Kaserne in PASEWALK and, on 22 October, 50 new tank trucks were forwarded to the truck regiment in EGGERSDORF. Other units are also expected to receive new motor vehicles.

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Miscellaneous.

14. The decrease of the personnel strength resulting from discharges in the fall was to be compensated by newly recruited personnel until 15 December. Since it appeared rather improbable that this target date will be met, several units detached individual recruiting officers or recruiting details which consisted of several men. The enlistment of students at officer candidate schools was almost completed prior to 15 November. The number of new students corresponds to that of graduates transferred to KVP units.

In preparation of the introduction of compulsory service, new files were prepared at all Kreis government departments after 10 June 1954.

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The files listed all males of the 1909 through 1940 classes and all females of certain professions of the 1914 through 1940 classes and were scheduled to be completed prior to 15 September.

Between 15 and 20 November, Walter Ulbricht and Otto Protowohl inspected the new constructions of the MdI/KVP in STRAUSBERG. Ulbricht reportedly severely criticized the luxurious furnishing of the buildings. Hereupon, current orders for the completion of the interior of the so-called Generalstabsgebäude (Headquarters Building) were allegedly cancelled. It is believed that the completion of this building, therefore, will be further delayed.

AUSTRIA and HUNGARY

15. Troop units of the 13th Gds Mech Div and the 95th Gds Ltz Artillery Div have been stationed at their usual winter posts since their retransfer from the DOELLERSHAIM troop training grounds. This retransfer was generally completed about 22 October 1954. The 25d AAA Div is also again stationed at their KORNSTUBURG and STOCKERAU posts.

The arrival of recruits from the USSR for Soviet troop units stationed in Austria continued throughout the last third of October. Return shipments of discharges were still observed between 1 and 10 November. The personnel exchange program appeared to have terminated during the second half of November.

Shipments of new vehicles from, and old vehicles to, the USSR indicate that motor vehicles of Soviet units stationed in Austria were also being exchanged.

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